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OFFICE OF GENERAL
COUNSEL

Clayton Bowler

Ozark, MO 65721

April 7, 2010

Thomasenia P. Duncan, General Counsel
Federal Election Commission
99 E Street, N.W.,
Washington, D.C. 20463

Dear Counsel,

After looking at Billy Long's campaign filings, I am more worried there is a clear violation of corporate donations by Long's own corporation to his campaign for Missouri's Seventh Congressional District.

Federal campaign finance laws are clear about direct donations from a corporation to a candidate, either monetary or in kind. They are against the law. The recent Supreme Court case on campaign finance reform did not overturn the Tillman Act, which makes corporate donations illegal.

After digging through Billy Long's official campaign finance records, it looks like the Long campaign leaves open many possibilities of possible Tillman Act violations.

In Billy Long's First Quarter 2009 Federal Election Commission Report, he lists \$352 paid out to Billy Long Auctions for use of their staff members and use of the copying machine. The report also lists Long's 1675 E. Seminole office building as the campaign headquarters, yet there is no expenditures listed for use of the facilities, electricity, telephone, etc. Obviously the donation of office space and use of corporate devices like electricity and phone need to be considered by Billy Long Auctions. The number here to remember is \$352.

Also remember this amount is for 36 days, since Long announced somewhere around February 23, 2010 according the KY3 Political Notebook.

In quarter two of 2009, with his campaign headquarters listed with the FEC at Billy Long Auction and the telephone number matching for the campaign with Billy Long Auctions, there is no listing of disbursement from the Long campaign for any use of the address at 1675 E. Seminole back to Billy Long Auction for use of their facilities. Corporate in kind donation?

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B. Full Name (Last, First, Middle Initial) Billy Long Auctions, LLC		Transaction ID: SB17.4411 Date of Disbursement 06/30/2009	
Mailing Address 1675-F E. Seminole		Amount of Each Disbursement this Period 1067.04	
City Springfield	State MO	Zip Code 65804	
Purpose of Disbursement Office staff and supplies		<input type="checkbox"/> Category/ Type	
Candidate Name			
Office Sought:	House Senate President	Disbursement For:	2010 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Primary <input type="checkbox"/> General Other (specify) ▼
State:	District:		

Let's look at the third quarter of 2009. In the third quarter of 2009, Billy Long hires Curtis Trent, who I have confirmed works in the Billy Long Auction offices after a phone call to the office, which I tried to donate to the campaign. The receptionist told me Trent hadn't showed up yet for the day, but if I called back in an hour or so he would be at work. Also, the electronic billboard that flashes the Billy Long for Congress signs were in full effect at this time, which I noticed every time I went to Best Buy last summer, which the Federal Election Commission should subpoena the sign company to find out exactly when the billboards began to show.

In the third quarter there is a record for NPC Dial Pay, which may be a phone service or it could be a robotic calling campaign he paid for. That's unclear, but since they use the Billy Long for Congress campaign uses the same phone number as Billy Long Auctions, one would think they would reimburse Billy Long Auction for the phone service.

Also, in the third quarter we see that Billy Long Auctions is reimbursed for \$1880.84 for postage, staff time, and the billboard rental. There are two questions that need to be asked here. The first is why is Billy Long's campaign reimbursing Billy Long Auctions for the billboard on South Glenstone? Why wouldn't they just contract with the sign company separately? Is he getting a better rate by mixing the two? It is rather curious isn't it?

The second question is why he is combining staff time, postage, and the billboard as one whole reimbursement. It's like he is covering something up. Still in the third quarter we don't see any clear reimbursements for leased space the campaign uses at Long Auction, and we know Curtis Trent was now on the payroll. What about that 882-LONG number they share. Business telephone rates are higher than residential, and for all we know, Billy may be making hundreds or thousands of dollars worth of calls for his campaign that are being paid for by Billy Long Auctions.

Then the Fourth Quarter suddenly gets really interesting. Suddenly we have the Long Campaign reimbursing the Long Auction campaign for office space. Now, there is clearly a paper trail of all sorts of political activity going on within the walls of Billy Long Auctions in the first three quarters that weren't reported. Why now?

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The fourth quarter of last year shows the Long Campaign reimbursed Long Auctions for \$2,810.16 for office staff, space, telephone, billboard, and postage. So, for \$936.72 cents a month, Billy Long's campaign has conveniently combined a strange collection of bills into one.

NAME OF COMMITTEE (in Full) Billy Long for Congress			
A. Full Name (Last, First, Middle Initial) Billy Long Auctions, LLC		Transaction ID: SB17.5728 Date of Disbursement 12/31/2008	
Mailing Address 1675-F E. Seminole		Amount of Each Disbursement this Period 2810.86	
City Springfield	State MO	Zip Code 65804	Category Type
Purpose of Disbursement Office staff, space, telephone, billboard and postage			
Candidate Name			Category Type
Office Sought: <input type="checkbox"/> House <input type="checkbox"/> Senate <input type="checkbox"/> President	Disbursement For: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Primary <input type="checkbox"/> General <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) <input type="checkbox"/>		
State:	District:		

So tell me. Do you really believe you can rent the most high tech sign in Springfield, keep your add consistently displayed like Long does, plus rent office space, and you figure you are going to need at least 200 square feet to set a desk, computer, campaign supplies, etc, and have full use of the telephone, postage, and staff members whenever you need them to work on the campaign for under \$1000 a month?

Let's say Curtis Trent, who appears to be one of Billy Long's key advisors in this campaign needs just 150 square feet in office space, which is a room 15X10. According to a visit to Carol Jones realtors, the average lease price for a building similar to Spring Valley office buildings Long Auctions sits in is between \$9 to \$12.50 per square foot. With my understanding of Federal Election Commission rules, if Long leased out the space for anything considerably under the fair market value of the space, it could be considered an corporate in kind donation. Let's give him a break. Let's say the campaign agreed to \$7 per square foot, and they use 150 square foot to conduct campaign business. They are already at \$1,050 per month to lease.

This is where I see a potential problem. For the first three quarters, he doesn't even list the space despite hiring campaign employees. Then suddenly in the Fourth Quarter, he's paying for the space. The quarter, he averages \$627.00 a month just to maintain the billboard, staff time, and postage. Are you seriously going to tell me, based on average lease prices in Springfield, the telephone bill and the office space is only costing \$309 a month extra. Why wouldn't you challenge the bookkeeping over at the Billy Long campaign?

Also, explain to me how so much work was done at Billy Long Auctions for the campaign without any consideration for the phone, the power, internet, and any other additional conveniences for the campaign that could be considered an in kind donation. Most of the reports never even consider those expenses, but they are legitimate expenses that should be disbursed from the campaign.

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There is something else that is missing on all four reports. As you know Billy Long claims he has driven to every goat ropin' county fair looking for votes. Why isn't there any reporting of the mileage he drives, which is reimbursable up to 41 cents a mile?

I know that many small-business men who are required to drive on business who title their vehicles under their business. The question why isn't there any reporting of all this driving Long is doing for his campaign. What about Curtis Trent's driving expenses? The Federal Election Commission needs to look if Long's vehicle that he uses, which is a White Ford with the license plate AUCTNR1, is titled to Billy Long Auctions, and if they are footing the bill for the vehicle, fuel, and maintenance. It's not too hard to figure out, when you look at Long's tweets, he has probably driven the most in this campaign. We also know he uses his auctions to talk to people about his campaign, which he has tweeted before. I know the IRS might also be interested in this as well.

Looking at the reports, one would think Billy Long is a miserly old scrooge who doesn't spend money, but looking around town and seeing the flash of his campaign for nearly a year now, something just doesn't appear to add up.

As mentioned before, the Long Campaign does not itemize their disbursements. They clump them together and make a single payment to Billy Long Auctions, who houses the Long Campaign and didn't receive any form of payment for office space or utilities like the phone until the fourth quarter of 2009. Three quarters went by without payment made to Long Auctions, which appears to be a violation of corporate in kind donations with the Tillman Act prevents.

In the Long Campaign's fourth quarter FEC filing, they claim they spent an average of \$936.72 each month for the quarter on office staff, office space, telephone service, postage, and the electronic billboard that frequently flashes Billy Long for Congress and Mel Hancock Now Endorses Billy Long for Congress. To me, that appears to be the bargain of the century, and I think there are many questions that need to be answered about how Long keeps his basic operating costs so low without crossing into a violation of corporate in kind donations.

So I called the phone number on the board that invites companies to use the South Glenstone digital billboard that sits between the sports bar and Target. They took my information and called me back during lunch today.

This is what I found about the sign. The minimum contract is \$250 a month and they have packages up to \$2000 a month. According to the representative I spoke to who identified his company's name as AdVentures Media.

Last night, I went out to the sight of the digital billboard and videotaped the board. In ten minutes time, four Billy Long for Congress messages popped up. There have been times when I have watched that sign, and the messages flash more frequently.

With this knowledge, I asked first how much would it cost to post an ad that flashes four times every ten minutes. He answered \$250.

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I told him is there a plan when you can flash your message more frequently during peak traffic times. There is, which explains why sometimes you see Long's messages more frequently than others. This of course would drive up the costs as they create a custom plan for your organization, so the Long campaign is definitely paying more than \$250 for their advertising campaign.

So does the Long campaign really expect the Federal Election Commission to believe they are paying less than a \$1000 a month for the billboard, office staff, office space, telephone service, and postage?

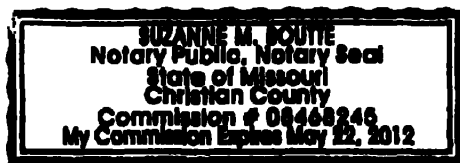
Another issue that should be addressed, I have heard it said that sign has been up since last April. I remember seeing when I went to Best Buy in the summer. The other question is do the federal campaign records match the contractual records? Of course, how would we really know? The illusion the Billy Long campaign creates makes it possible, since they reimburse Long Auctions for the sign usage, they got a couple months free out of it at the expense of Long Auctions just like they got office space and telephone usage for nearly three quarters without giving a dime to the auction company. Of course, it's very possible all of this crosses the fine line of corporate in kind donations.

Sincerely,



Clayton Bowler

Subscribed and sworn to before me on the 7 day of Apr 20 10.



Suzanne M. Bouffé
April 7, 2010

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